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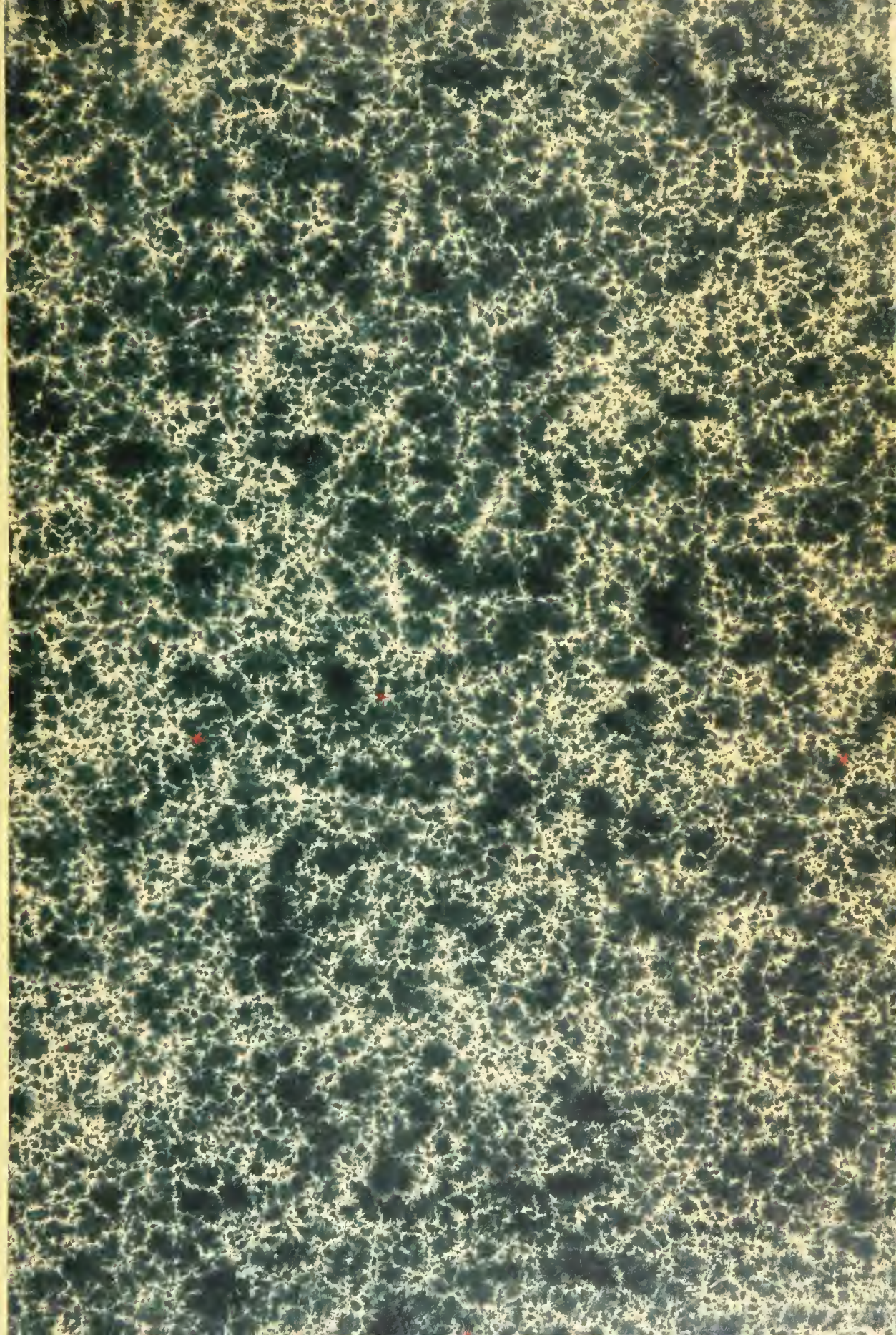

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AN ODE

UPON THE

SEMI-CENTENNIAL OF FRANKLIN AND MARSHALL COLLEGE,
JUNE, 1903

BY LLOYD MIFFLIN

Si monumentum requiris, circumspice

Now, on this memorable day,
Within this fertile garden of the land
Blessed with perennial streams,
Swatara, Conowingo, and Pequea,
And hundred brooklets clear as they
With which the region teems;
Rich with alluvial valleys, that the hand
Sprung from the German, honorably tills,
And where the cattle on a thousand hills
Browse ankle-deep in clover-bloom,
Or by the Conestoga margin wade
Far in the willowy shade;
Now, when the green illimitable vales
And dimpled slopes and dells
Shed round the rare perfume
Of coming harvests with their wealth replete,

And here, returning to the dales
Amid the fruitful heat,
June, reminiscent of the rippling sea
And all its rolling swells,
Waves with her breath our ripening fields of grain
And makes a billowy ocean of the wheat;
Now, when the lambs are in the flock
And call across the green;
And when the red-winged blackbird on the dock
Sings as he settles down, serene
In cloudless ecstasy,
And the dear lark, with joy akin to pain,
Floats o'er our fields—a feathered song—
Pathetically sweet;—
In such a time—so joyous—it were meet
That we, ephemera of an hour
Who to the living still belong,
Should lift our voices through the lips of Song
In recognition of the price,
In recognition of the faith—the power,
The courage and the sacrifice,
The struggles, often threatening defeat,—
The final triumph of the men now dead,
English and German bred,
Whose effort and whose aid
Made possible this studious retreat,
These College Halls, cresting the gentle glade,

These Academic bowers,
These stately Walls in classic shade
Crowned with their clustered towers!

Well may we praise these men of old,
Whose work of faith untold—
A faith that here survives—
Helped rear this dual Hall;
And those who brought their gold,
And those who, being poor, gave more than all
In that they gave their lives!
Honor the Founders! men to be revered;
We need not name them, are they not renowned
And to the heart endeared?
And those that clustered round
Your alien Flower from Heidelberg;
And him who drew the lightnings down,
The generous Printer of renown
Who, at the age of eighty-one,
With patriot hands—
That now are dust a hundred years and more—
Here where the College stands,
Laid the first corner-stone,—
His name in part your Alma Mater bears;
While as an added coronal she wears
Others especially her own—
A glorious line of men of lore:

Your College knows each honored name,
She held them reverent of yore
And worthy of acclaim;
And in your Annals where each one appears
The page is blotted by her grateful tears.
You love their memory, and they live apart
Enshrined within the sanctum of the heart:
Honor the Scholar, and the Good, the Just!
Honor the silent dust!

Yea! honor them—the dead! as time withdraws
We see they bravely battled in their cause.
Duty hath still her heroes—valiant Knights
Unblazoned by the world, but in men's hearts
Their silent deeds, like beacon-lights
Shine on, and guide us from afar.
The mortal comes; he labors, and departs;
But strongly girt with spiritual powers
His soul beams on us like a star
That still doth shed
Its first effulgence though the star be dead—
Though gone, the light survives:
And if our lips are sealed
From plaudits for the living, none the less
Time, the recorder, on his scroll revealed,
Will show the morrow they fulfilled their trust
With honor and with nobleness:

Teachers of fervid zeal;
The guardian mentors in an age complex;
Torch-bearers of the future's weal;
True to the motto on their chosen Seal—
Lux et Lex!
Lo, the old Nation, day by day,
Passes, alas! away,
And the new Nation needs
Men of high purpose and heroic deeds
For the stern conflict of the Country's life.
Send forth, O College, such as these!
Unto thy land give thou such legacies!
Equip thy youth with rugged virtues high,
Not with that apathy the indifferent wear
Fatal to man and state,
But anchored, resolute to do and dare,
Unpurchasable, of nerve and deed,
Men simply-great,
With deep conviction, who, at utmost need
Would stand the champions of the State,
Against her foes
Storming the enemy's gate
With thundrous eloquence of patriot words;
Or, if necessity arose,
Girt with inviolate swords
Fulgent with light,
Battle for Conscience, Liberty and Right;

Such men the voice of History doth revere—
O nurture them within this College here!

What of the donors?—those who in the stress
Of arduous seasons to the rescue came,—
Look o'er that fair demesne,—
The statued lawn, the noble piles, the storied green,—
Are not the beauty and the loveliness
Of such Memorials sufficient fame,
With sweet remembrance through the ages hence?
—Sufficient recompense? . . . .
From the lone bourn of life's long pilgrimage
Let *him* reply, who dwells in honored age—
Founder of that fair Hall which bears his name—
Is there a crown more grateful to the brow
Than this that crowns him now?

Mother of Learning, hail!
Oh, mayst thou, prosperous, rejoice
For years recurrent of thy Jubilee!
Long may thy turrets beckon, and thy voice
Summon the youth from many a distant vale!
Long may men find in thee,
Within thy classic pale,
Blessing of studious serenity—
The ethereal fruit and flower of the Wise!
And when this age shall pass, as pass it must,

And crumble into dust,
Thy towers shall still arise, gladding the eyes
Of true men yet to be,
And by the side of these
Grouped 'mid the gracious trees,—
Mater of sweet amenities!—
May added Halls and new-built spires
Lift their enlightening crests above the lawn;
And the still Greater College rear her head—
Greater, not dearer than the old,—
And wider radiance shed,
And by her lustrous effluence manifold
Illumination spread,—
True harbinger of the new-born world's desires,
Forerunner of the hoped-for Dawn
That ever in the future glows,
To which the soul aspires;
And as the depths of Ignorance decrease
And the dense darkness goes,
Oh, mayst thou, filled with potency anew
The sacred cause pursue
Nor with the Century cease,
But still may Learning blossom as the rose
And all thy paths be peace!

NORWOOD
June, 1903.

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